

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

PART 325
GREAT LAKES SUBMERGED LANDS

324.32501 Additional definitions.

Sec. 32501. As used in this part:

(a) "Beach" means the area landward of the shoreline of the Great Lakes as the term shoreline is defined in section 32301.

(b) "Beach maintenance activities" means any of the following in the area of Great Lakes bottomlands lying below the ordinary high-water mark and above the water's edge:

(i) Manual or mechanized leveling of sand.

(ii) Mowing of vegetation.

(iii) Manual de minimis removal of vegetation.

(iv) Grooming of soil.

(v) Construction and maintenance of a path.

(c) "Debris" means animal or fish carcasses, zebra mussel shells, dead vegetation, trash, and discarded materials of human-made origin.

(d) "Department" means the department of environmental quality.

(e) "Director" means the director of the department.

(f) "Environmental area" means an environmental area as defined in section 32301.

(g) "Grooming of soil" means raking or dragging, pushing, or pulling metal teeth through the top 4 inches of soil without disturbance of or destruction to plant roots, for the purpose of removing debris.

(h) "Leveling of sand" means the relocation of sand within areas being leveled that are predominantly free of vegetation, including the redistribution, grading, and spreading of sand that has been deposited through wind or wave action onto upland riparian property.

(i) "Marina purposes" means an operation making use of submerged bottomlands or filled-in bottomlands of the Great Lakes for the purpose of service to boat owners or operators, which operation may restrict or prevent the free public use of the affected bottomlands or filled-in lands.

(j) "Mowing of vegetation" means the cutting of vegetation to a height of not less than 2 inches, without disturbance of soil or plant roots.

(k) "Path" means a temporary access walkway from the upland riparian property directly to the shoreline across swales with standing water, not exceeding 6 feet in bottom width and consisting of sand and pebbles obtained from the exposed, nonvegetated bottomlands or from the upland riparian property.

(l) "Removal of vegetation" means the manual or mechanized removal of vegetation other than the de minimis removal of vegetation.

(m) "Wetland" means that term as it is defined in section 30301.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 2003, Act 14, Imd. Eff. June 5, 2003.

Compiler's note: For transfer of authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of the Land and Water Management Division, with the exception of the farmland and open space preservation program, natural rivers program, and Michigan information resource inventory system, to the Director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, see E.R.O. No. 1995-16, compiled at MCL 324.99901 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32502 Unpatented lake bottomlands and unpatented made lands in Great Lakes; construction of part.

Sec. 32502. The lands covered and affected by this part are all of the unpatented lake bottomlands and unpatented made lands in the Great Lakes, including the bays and harbors of the Great Lakes, belonging to the state or held in trust by it, including those lands that have been artificially filled in. The waters covered and affected by this part are all of the waters of the Great Lakes within the boundaries of the state. This part shall be construed so as to preserve and protect the interests of the general public in the lands and waters described in this section, to provide for the sale, lease, exchange, or other disposition of unpatented lands and the private or public use of waters over patented and unpatented lands, and to permit the filling in of patented submerged lands whenever it is determined by the department that the private or public use of those lands and waters will not substantially affect the public use of those lands and waters for hunting, fishing, swimming, pleasure boating, or navigation or that the public trust in the state will not be impaired by those agreements

for use, sales, lease, or other disposition. The word “land” or “lands” as used in this part refers to the aforesaid described unpatented lake bottomlands and unpatented made lands and patented lands in the Great Lakes and the bays and harbors of the Great Lakes lying below and lakeward of the natural ordinary high-water mark, but this part does not affect property rights secured by virtue of a swamp land grant or rights acquired by accretions occurring through natural means or reliction. For purposes of this part, the ordinary high-water mark shall be at the following elevations above sea level, international Great Lakes datum of 1955: Lake Superior, 601.5 feet; Lakes Michigan and Huron, 579.8 feet; Lake St. Clair, 574.7 feet; and Lake Erie, 571.6 feet.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Compiler's note: For transfer of authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of the Land and Water Management Division, with the exception of the farmland and open space preservation program, natural rivers program, and Michigan information resource inventory system, to the Director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, see E.R.O. No. 1995-16, compiled at MCL 324.99901 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32503 Agreements pertaining to waters over and filling in of submerged patented lands; lease or deed of unpatented lands; terms, conditions, and requirements; reservation of mineral rights; exception; riparian owner dredging or placing materials on bottomland; permit; lease or deed allowing drilling operations for exploration of oil or gas purposes; execution of agreement, lease, or deed with United States.

Sec. 32503. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the department, after finding that the public trust in the waters will not be impaired or substantially affected, may enter into agreements pertaining to waters over and the filling in of submerged patented lands, or to lease or deed unpatented lands, after approval of the state administrative board. Quitclaim deeds, leases, or agreements covering unpatented lands may be issued or entered into by the department with any person, and shall contain such terms, conditions, and requirements as the department determines to be just and equitable and in conformance with the public trust. The department shall reserve to the state all mineral rights, including, but not limited to, coal, oil, gas, sand, gravel, stone, and other materials or products located or found in those lands, except where lands are occupied or to be occupied for residential purposes at the time of conveyance.

(2) A riparian owner shall not dredge or place spoil or other materials on bottomland except as authorized by a permit issued by the department pursuant to part 13.

(3) The department shall not enter into a lease or deed that allows drilling operations beneath unpatented lands for the exploration or production of oil or gas.

(4) An agreement, lease, or deed entered into under this part by the department with the United States shall be entered into and executed pursuant to the property rights acquisition act, 1986 PA 201, MCL 3.251 to 3.262.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 2002, Act 148, Imd. Eff. Apr. 5, 2002;—Am. 2004, Act 325, Imd. Eff. Sept. 10, 2004.

Compiler's note: Enrolled House Bill No. 5118 was not signed by the Governor, but, having been presented to him at 3:44 p.m. on March 22, 2002, and not having been returned by him to the House of Representatives within the 14 days prescribed by Const 1963, art IV, sec 33, became law (2002 PA 148) on April 5, 2002, the Legislature having continued in session.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32504 Unpatented lake lands and unpatented made lands; application for conveyance; contents; qualifications of applicant; consent; approval; fee.

Sec. 32504. (1) Application for a deed or lease to unpatented lands or agreement for use of water areas over patented lands shall be on forms provided by the department. An application shall include a surveyed description of the lands or water area applied for, together with a surveyed description of the riparian or littoral property lying adjacent and contiguous to the lands or water area, certified to by a registered land surveyor. The description shall show the location of the water's edge at the time it was prepared and other information that is required by the department. The applicant shall be a riparian or littoral owner or owners of property touching or situated opposite the unpatented land or water area over patented lands applied for or an occupant of that land. The application shall include the names and mailing addresses of all persons in possession or occupancy or having an interest in the adjacent or contiguous riparian or littoral property or having riparian or littoral rights or interests in the lands or water areas applied for, and the application shall be accompanied by the written consent of all persons having an interest in the lands or water areas applied for in

the application.

(2) Before an application is acted upon by the department, the applicant shall secure approval of or permission for his or her proposed use of such lands or water area from any federal agency as provided by law, the department with the advice of the Michigan waterways commission, and the legislative body of the local unit or units of government within which such land or water area is or will be included, or to which it is contiguous or adjacent. A deed, lease, or agreement shall not be issued or entered into by the department without such approvals or permission. The department may also require the applicant to furnish an abstract of title and ownership, and a 20-year tax history on the riparian or littoral property that is contiguous or adjacent to the lands or water area applied for, as well as on the lands applied for, if available.

(3) The department shall require the applicant to deposit a fee of not less than \$50.00 for each application filed. The fee shall be deposited with the state treasurer to the credit of the state's general fund. If a deed, lease, or other agreement is approved by the department, the applicant is entitled to credit for the fee against the consideration that is paid for the deed, lease, or other agreement.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32504a Restoration or maintenance of lighthouse; lease or agreement for use of lands; "approved organization" defined.

Sec. 32504a. (1) The department may accept an application under this part from an approved organization, whether or not the approved organization is a riparian landowner, and may enter into a lease or agreement for the use of lands described in section 32502 on which a lighthouse is located, including the use of water over those lands immediately adjacent to the lighthouse.

(2) As used in this section, "approved organization" means a lawful nonprofit entity as approved by the department, a local unit of government, a federal or state agency or department, an educational agency, or a community development organization, that is seeking to secure a lease or agreement under this section for the purpose of restoring or maintaining a lighthouse.

History: Add. 2002, Act 650, Imd. Eff. Dec. 23, 2002.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32505 Unpatented lake bottomlands and unpatented made lands; consideration for conveyances or lease.

Sec. 32505. (1) If the department determines that it is in the public interest to grant an applicant a deed or lease to such lands or enter into an agreement to permit use and improvements in the waters or to enter into any other agreement in regard thereto, the department shall determine the amount of consideration to be paid to the state by the applicant for the conveyance or lease of unpatented lands.

(2) The department may permit, by lease or agreement, the filling in of patented and unpatented submerged lands and permit permanent improvements and structures after finding that the public trust will not be impaired or substantially injured.

(3) The department may issue deeds or may enter into leases if the unpatented lands applied for have been artificially filled in or are proposed to be changed from the condition that exists on October 14, 1955 by filling, sheet piling, shoring, or by any other means, and such lands are used or to be used or occupied in whole or in part for uses other than existing, lawful riparian or littoral purposes. The consideration to be paid to the state for the conveyance or lease of unpatented lands by the applicant shall be not less than the fair, cash market value of the lands determined as of the date of the filing of the application, minus any improvements placed on the lands, but the sale price shall not be less than 30% of the value of the land. In determining the fair, cash market value of the lands applied for, the department may give due consideration to the fact that the lands are connected with the riparian or littoral property belonging to the applicant, and to the uses, including residential and commercial, being made or which can be made of the lands.

(4) Agreements for the lands or water area described in section 32502 may be granted to or entered into with local units of government for public purposes and containing those terms and conditions that may be considered just and equitable in view of the public trust involved and may include the granting of permission to make such fills as may be necessary.

(5) If the unpatented lands applied for have not been filled in or in any way substantially changed from their natural character at the time the application is filed with the department, and the application is filed for the purpose of flood control, shore erosion control, drainage and sanitation control, or to straighten irregular

shore lines, then the consideration to be paid to the state by the applicant shall be the fair, cash value of such land, giving due consideration to its being adjacent to and connected with the riparian or littoral property owned by the applicant.

(6) Leases or agreements covering unpatented lands may be granted or entered into with riparian or littoral proprietors for commercial marina purposes or for marinas operated by persons for consideration and containing terms and conditions that are considered by the department to be just and equitable. The leases may include either filled or unfilled lake bottomlands, or both. Rental shall commence as of the date of use of the unpatented lands for the marina operations. Dockage and other uses by marinas in waters over patented lands on October 14, 1955 shall be considered to be lawful riparian use.

(7) If the department after investigation determines that an applicant has willfully and knowingly filled in or in any way substantially changed the lands applied for with an intent to defraud, or if the applicant has acquired such lands with knowledge of such a fraudulent intent and is not an innocent purchaser, the sale price shall be the fair, cash market value of the land. An applicant may request a hearing of a determination made under this subsection. The department shall grant a hearing if requested.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32506 Unpatented lands and unpatented made lands; value determination by department; appraisal; decision of court.

Sec. 32506. The fair, cash market value of lands approved for sale under this part shall be determined by the department. Consideration paid to the state shall not be less than \$50.00. If the applicant is not satisfied with the value determined by the department, within 30 days after the receipt of the determination he or she may submit a petition in writing to the circuit court of the county in which the lands are located, and the court shall appoint an appraiser or appraisers as the court shall determine for an appraisal of the lands. The decision of the court is final.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32507 Receipts; disposition; accounting; employees.

Sec. 32507. (1) All money received by the department from the sale, lease, or other disposition of land and water areas under this part shall be forwarded to the state treasurer and be credited to the land and water management permit fee fund created in section 30113.

(2) The department shall comply with the accounting laws of this state and the requirements with respect to submission of budgets. The department may hire employees, assistants, and services that may be necessary within the appropriation made by the legislature and may delegate this authority as may be necessary to implement this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32508 Lands conveyed; taxation.

Sec. 32508. All lands conveyed or leased under this part are subject to taxation and the general property tax laws and other laws as other real estate used and taxed by the governmental unit or units within which the land is or may be included.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32509 Rules.

Sec. 32509. The department may promulgate rules, in accordance with the requirements of law, consistent with this part, that may be necessary to implement this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32510 Land filled, excavated, or modified without approval; misdemeanor; penalty;

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issuance or service of appearance ticket; “minor offense” defined.

Sec. 32510. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a person who excavates or fills or in any manner alters or modifies any of the land or waters subject to this part without the approval of the department is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both. Land altered or modified in violation of this part shall not be sold to any person convicted under this section at less than fair, cash market value.

(2) A person who commits a minor offense is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00 for each violation. A law enforcement officer may issue and serve an appearance ticket upon a person for a minor offense pursuant to sections 9a to 9g of chapter IV of the code of criminal procedure, Act No. 175 of the Public Acts of 1927, being sections 764.9a to 764.9g of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

(3) As used in this section, “minor offense” means either of the following violations of this part if the department determines that restoration of the affected property is not required:

(a) The failure to obtain a permit under this part.

(b) A violation of a permit issued under this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32511 Certificate of location of lakeward boundary; application; riparian owner; fee.

Sec. 32511. A riparian owner may apply to the department for a certificate suitable for recording indicating the location of his or her lakeward boundary or indicating that the land involved has accreted to his or her property as a result of natural accretions or placement of a lawful, permanent structure. The application shall be accompanied by a fee of \$200.00 and proof of upland ownership.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32512 Acts prohibited; exceptions.

Sec. 32512. (1) Unless a permit has been granted by the department or authorization has been granted by the legislature, or except as to boat wells and slips facilitating private, noncommercial, recreational boat use, not exceeding 50 feet in length where the spoil is not disposed of below the ordinary high-water mark of the body of water to which it is connected, a person shall not do any of the following:

(a) Construct, dredge, commence, or do any work with respect to an artificial canal, channel, ditch, lagoon, pond, lake, or similar waterway where the purpose is ultimate connection of the waterway with any of the Great Lakes, including Lake St. Clair.

(b) Connect any natural or artificially constructed waterway, canal, channel, ditch, lagoon, pond, lake, or similar waterway with any of the Great Lakes, including Lake St. Clair, for navigation or any other purpose.

(c) Dredge or place spoil or other material on bottomland.

(d) Construct a marina.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), and with respect to lands covered and affected by this part, a permit or other approval is not required under this part for either of the following:

(a) Until November 1, 2007, beach maintenance activities that meet all of the following conditions:

(i) The activities shall not occur in environmental areas and shall not violate part 365 or rules promulgated under that part, or the endangered species act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, 87 Stat. 884, or rules promulgated under that act.

(ii) The width of any mowing of vegetation shall not exceed the width of the riparian property or 100 feet, whichever is less.

(iii) All collected debris shall be disposed of properly outside of any wetland.

(b) Until 3 years after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this subdivision, removal of vegetation as authorized in section 32516.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 2003, Act 14, Imd. Eff. June 5, 2003.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32512a Minor project categories; activities; conditions; application; notice; general permit; mowing or removal of vegetation.

Sec. 32512a. (1) After providing notice and an opportunity for a public hearing, the department shall

establish minor project categories of activities that are similar in nature, have minimal adverse environmental effects when performed separately, and will have only minimal cumulative adverse effects on the environment. The department may act upon an application received pursuant to section 32513 for an activity within a minor project category without providing notice pursuant to section 32514. A minor project category shall not be valid for more than 5 years, but may be reestablished. All other provisions of this part, except provisions applicable only to general permits, are applicable to a minor project.

(2) The department, after notice and opportunity for a public hearing, shall issue general permits on a statewide basis or within a local unit of government for a category of activities if the department determines that the activities are similar in nature, will cause only minimal adverse environmental effects when performed separately, and will have only minimal cumulative adverse effects on the environment. A general permit shall be based on the requirements of this part and the rules promulgated under this part, and shall set forth the requirements and standards that shall apply to an activity authorized by the general permit. Before authorizing a specific project to proceed under a general permit, the department may provide notice pursuant to section 32514 but shall not hold a public hearing and shall not typically require a site inspection. A general permit shall not be valid for more than 5 years, but may be reissued.

(3) A general permit under this section may be issued for the mowing of vegetation or the removal of vegetation in the area between the ordinary high-water mark and the water's edge. An application under this subsection may be submitted by a local unit of government on behalf of property owners within its jurisdiction or by 1 or more adjacent property owners for riparian property located within the same county.

History: Add. 2003, Act 14, Imd. Eff. June 5, 2003;—Am. 2009, Act 120, Eff. Nov. 6, 2009.

Compiler's note: Enacting section 1 of Act 120 of 2009 provides:

"Enacting section 1. This amendatory act does not take effect unless both of the following requirements are met:

"(a) \$4,000,000.00 from the cleanup and redevelopment trust fund created in section 3e of 1976 IL 1, MCL 445.573e, and \$4,000,000.00 from the community pollution prevention fund created in section 3f of 1976 IL 1, MCL 445.573f, is appropriated by the legislature to the environmental protection fund created in section 503a of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.503a.

"(b) \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated by the legislature from the environmental protection fund to support the program under part 303 of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.30301 to 324.30329."

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32513 Application for permit; contents; fees; disposition of fees.

Sec. 32513. (1) To obtain a permit for any work or connection specified in section 32512, a person shall file an application with the department on a form provided by the department. The application shall include all of the following:

(a) The name and address of the applicant.

(b) The legal description of the lands included in the project.

(c) A summary statement of the purpose of the project.

(d) A map or diagram showing the proposal on an adequate scale with contours and cross-section profiles of the waterway to be constructed.

(e) Other information required by the department.

(2) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), until October 1, 2011, an application for a permit under this section shall be accompanied by the following fee, as applicable:

(a) For a project in a category of activities for which a general permit is issued under section 32512a, a fee of \$100.00.

(b) For activities included in the minor project category as described in rules promulgated under this part and for a permit for the removal of vegetation in an area that is not more than 100 feet wide or the width of the property, whichever is less, or the mowing of vegetation under a general permit, in the area between the ordinary high-water mark and the water's edge, a fee of \$50.00.

(c) For construction or expansion of a marina, a fee of:

(i) \$50.00 for an expansion of 1-10 slips to an existing permitted marina.

(ii) \$100.00 for a new marina with 1-10 proposed marina slips.

(iii) \$250.00 for an expansion of 11-50 slips to an existing permitted marina, plus \$10.00 for each slip over 50.

(iv) \$500.00 for a new marina with 11-50 proposed marina slips, plus \$10.00 for each slip over 50.

(v) \$1,500.00 if an existing permitted marina proposes maintenance dredging of 10,000 cubic yards or more or the addition of seawalls, bulkheads, or revetments of 500 feet or more.

(d) For major projects other than a project described in subdivision (c)(v), involving any of the following, a fee of \$2,000.00:

- (i) Dredging of 10,000 cubic yards or more.
- (ii) Filling of 10,000 cubic yards or more.
- (iii) Seawalls, bulkheads, or revetment of 500 feet or more.
- (iv) Filling or draining of 1 acre or more of coastal wetland.
- (v) New dredging or upland boat basin excavation in areas of suspected contamination.
- (vi) New breakwater or channel jetty.
- (vii) Shore protection, such as groins and underwater stabilizers, that extend 150 feet or more on Great Lakes bottomlands.
- (viii) New commercial dock or wharf of 300 feet or more in length.
- (e) For all other projects not listed in subdivisions (a) to (d), \$500.00.
- (3) A project that requires review and approval under this part and 1 or more of the following is subject to only the single highest permit fee required under this part or the following:
 - (a) Part 301.
 - (b) Part 303.
 - (c) Part 323.
 - (d) Section 3104.
 - (e) Section 117 of the land division act, 1967 PA 288, MCL 560.117.
- (4) If work has been done in violation of a permit requirement under this part and restoration is not ordered by the department, the department may accept an application for a permit if the application is accompanied by a fee equal to 2 times the permit fee otherwise required under this section.
- (5) The department shall forward all fees collected under this section to the state treasurer for deposit into the land and water management permit fee fund created in section 30113.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 1995, Act 170, Imd. Eff. Oct. 9, 1995;—Am. 1999, Act 106, Imd. Eff. July 7, 1999;—Am. 2003, Act 14, Imd. Eff. June 5, 2003;—Am. 2003, Act 163, Imd. Eff. Aug. 12, 2003;—Am. 2008, Act 276, Imd. Eff. Sept. 29, 2008;—Am. 2009, Act 120, Eff. Nov. 6, 2009.

Compiler's note: Enacting section 1 of Act 120 of 2009 provides:

"Enacting section 1. This amendatory act does not take effect unless both of the following requirements are met:

"(a) \$4,000,000.00 from the cleanup and redevelopment trust fund created in section 3e of 1976 IL 1, MCL 445.573e, and \$4,000,000.00 from the community pollution prevention fund created in section 3f of 1976 IL 1, MCL 445.573f, is appropriated by the legislature to the environmental protection fund created in section 503a of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.503a.

"(b) \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated by the legislature from the environmental protection fund to support the program under part 303 of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.30301 to 324.30329."

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32514 Application for permit; copies; local units; adjacent riparian owners; objections; hearing; time; notice.

Sec. 32514. Upon receipt of the application, the department shall mail copies to the department of public health, the clerks of the county, city, village, and township, and the drain commissioner of the county or, if none, the road commissioner of the county, in which the project or body of water affected is located, and to the adjacent riparian owners, accompanied by a statement that unless a written objection is filed with the department within 20 days after the mailing of the copies, the department may take action to grant the application. The department may set the application for public hearing. At least 10 days' notice of the hearing shall be given by publication in a newspaper circulated in the county and by mailing copies of the notice to the persons named in this section.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32515 Artificial waterway; permit; issuance; conditions; maintenance.

Sec. 32515. If the department finds that the project will not injure the public trust or interest including fish and game habitat, that the project conforms to the requirements of law for sanitation, and that no material injury to the rights of any riparian owners on any body of water affected will result, the department shall issue a permit authorizing enlargement of the waterway affected. The permit shall provide that the artificial waterway shall be a public waterway, except intake or discharge canals or channels on property owned, controlled, and used by a public utility. The existing and future owners of land fronting on the artificial waterway are liable for maintenance of the waterway in accordance with the conditions of the permit.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995;—Am. 2004, Act 325, Imd. Eff. Sept. 10, 2004.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.32516 Removal of vegetation; designation of areas; conditions; procedures; report.

Sec. 32516. (1) Within 10 working days after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this section, the director shall identify 2 areas of the shoreline of the Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair where the removal of vegetation between the ordinary high-water mark and the water's edge shall be allowed without a permit under this part or part 303. The designation shall be made in writing, is final, and is not subject to appeal. Within 1 year after this designation is made, the director may designate additional areas unless he or she determines that making additional designations would result in pollution, impairment, or destruction to the natural resources of the state. Within areas designated by the director under this subsection, the removal of vegetation is allowed if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The landowner has received a letter of approval from the department under subsection (2) confirming at least 3 of the following:

(i) The area is unconsolidated material predominantly composed of sand, rock, or pebbles, or is predominantly vegetated by non-native or invasive species.

(ii) The area met the requirement of subparagraph (i) as of January 1, 1997.

(iii) The removal of vegetation does not violate part 365 or rules promulgated under that part, or the endangered species act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, 87 Stat. 884, or rules promulgated under that act.

(iv) The area in which removal of vegetation may occur is not an environmental area.

(b) The area in which removal of vegetation may occur does not exceed 50% of the width of the upland riparian property or 100 feet, whichever is greater, or a wider area if approved by the director.

(c) All collected vegetation shall be disposed of properly outside of any wetland.

(2) A person who owns riparian property on the shoreline of the Great Lakes or Lake St. Clair within an area designated under subsection (1) may submit to the director a request to conduct removal of vegetation. The request shall be submitted by certified mail or facsimile and shall include the address of the property, a parcel description by section, township, and range, the parcel tax number, the width in feet of the shoreline frontage, the width of the area proposed for removal of vegetation, and permission for the department to conduct an on-site inspection, if needed. Within 10 working days after receipt of a request under this subsection, the director shall notify the riparian property owner, in writing, whether the conditions in subsection (1)(a) are met.

(3) Upon receipt of a letter of approval under subsection (2), the riparian property owner may conduct the removal of vegetation as provided in subsection (1).

(4) By January 1, 2006, the director shall prepare and submit to the senate majority leader, the speaker of the house of representatives, the standing committees of the legislature with jurisdiction primarily related to natural resources and the environment, and the governor a report that evaluates the activities allowed under subsection (1), describes the impacts to the affected areas, and recommends statutory changes based upon the evaluation, if appropriate.

History: Add. 2003, Act 14, Imd. Eff. June 5, 2003.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA